(a) whether Government is planning a major infrastructure development project in the Andaman and Nicobar (A and N) Islands by introducing international and chartered flights;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government is also pushing for a proposal for an air cargo complex in the islands;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) whether there is a proposal to connect Nicobar Islands with Kolkata and Chennai?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Occasional operations of International and Domestic chartered flights are already taking place at Veer Savarkar International Airport, Port Blair in Andaman and Nicobar Islands. These flights are operated at the existing Civil Enclave of AAI with peak hour capacity of 400 passengers and facilities for limited International flights. AAI has a proposal for construction of new integrated Terminal Building with all modern amenities and facilities and peak hour capacity of 1200 passengers at an estimated cost of Rs. 430 crores, subject to availability of required additional land from Administration of Andaman and Nicobar Islands and Coast Guard for which a tripartite MoU has been signed on 09.07.2009. The work for expansion/strengthening of apron with two additional taxiways for parking of 1 AB310 and 5 AB-321 at an estimated cost of 28 crores is under progress and likely to be completed by July, 2009.

(c) and (d) The proposed Air Cargo Complex at an estimated cost of Rs. 467 lakhs with a bearing capacity of handling 1750 cubic meters of general cargo and 240 cubic meters of sensitive cargo and 20 MT of Perishable Cargo is under construction by A and N Administration. AAI will be taking over the completed infrastructure and manage the Air Cargo operations after modalities are worked out between AAI and A and N Administration.

(e) At present scheduled air services are available only to/from Port Blair from Chennai and Kolkata. Domestic Airlines are free to operate anywhere in country subject to compliance of route dispersal guidelines issued by the Government. However, no proposal has been received from any airlines operator to operate to/from Nicobar Islands.

Planes on lease by Air India

†1804. SHRI MANOHAR JOSHI: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the planes taken on lease by Air India are not making profit;

(b) if so, whether Air India would withdrew these planes from its operations; and

(c) the number of planes to be included in the fleet of Air India that would meet its requirements?

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Yes, Sir. The profitability of the leased fleet depends on the routes they operate. However, due to depressed yields on account of low load factors and low revenue per seat, some routes operated by the leased fleet have shown operating losses.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The erstwhile constituents of Air India, had placed an order of 111 aircraft to be delivered from 2006 to 2012. Of these 111 aircraft, 51 have joined the fleet. The remaining aircraft will be inducted as per the revised delivery schedule.

Imposition of user charges on air passengers

1805. SHRI R. C. SINGH: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Airports Authority of India (AAI) is planning to impose user charges on passengers flying out of airports that AAI has upgraded;

(b) if so, the details of airports on which AAI is proposed to impose user charges; and

(c) the details of formula adopted in imposing user charges on domestic and international passengers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) to (c) A proposal to impose User Development Fee at Trivandrum, Ahmedabad, Udaipur, Amritsar, Varanasi, Vizag, Trichy, Jaipur and Mangalore has been received from Airports Authority of India which is under examination.

Allotment of land for Airport in Madhya Pradesh

†1806. SHRI RAGHUNANDAN SHARMA: Will the Minister of CIVIL AVIATION be pleased to state:

(a) the airports for the development of which the Airports Authority of India (AAI) has been allotted land by State Government of Madhya Pradesh;

(b) whether development work has been completed there;

(c) whether the AAI has demanded additional land measuring between 1.58 acres to 2.00 acres from the State Government;

(d) if so, the details of the action taken by Government;

(e) whether the development works relating to the building of terminals and night landing facility has been completed after the allotment of land; and

(f) if not, by when the same would be completed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL AVIATION (SHRI PRAFUL PATEL): (a) Airports Authority of India (AAI) has been allotted land by the Government of Madhya Pradesh at Indore and Bhopal airports.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.